

BAGC Minutes

8 May 2014

Present:

Jane Smith, Randall Anderson, Bruce Badger, Robert Barker, David Bradshaw, Garth Leder, Sarah Hudson, Tim Macer, David Murray elected members; Kai Virtanen, membership secretary; Gillian Laidlaw, Mountjoy; Brian Parkes, Speed; Pat Spicer, Shakespeare; John Tomlinson, Cromwell; Janet Wells, John Trundle; Gianetta Corley, Gilbert; Gordon Griffiths, Bunyan; Averil Baldwin, Thomas More; Tony Swanson, Lauderdale; Helen Kay, Willoughby; Jenny Addison, Frobisher; John Whitehead, Breton

Apologies:

Cliff Paice, Richard Collins, Nigel Dixon, John Tomlinson, Angela Starling, John Taysum

1. Welcomes

The chair welcomed Jenny Addison, chair of Frobisher, as the new Frobisher representative; Helen Kay as the new Willoughby representative, and David Murray as a newly elected member. Angela Starling had stepped down as an elected member and the committee minuted its thanks to her.

3. Matters arising not otherwise on agenda

“Item 3. 125 London Wall. The chair said she was trying to fix another meeting with the building managers because the lighting continued to be erratic and disturbing.” The chair was still trying to fix another meeting; the builder manager kept saying he was working on it. Garth Leder said that the chief planning officer, while admitting there was not much they could do about light pollution, had offered to write to JP Morgan, the building owner, urging them to address residents’ concerns.

Short term lets. “Agreed Garth Leder will write to planning and the chair would respond to the consultation [and lobby the MP]” The chair reported that as a result of Garth’s letter the chair of policy and resources had written, in collaboration with Westminster and another borough, to the minister. The chair had also written to Mark Field, our MP, who replied to say that he had given the same message to the minister. Tim Macer added that the BEO thought the lease could only be used to address someone running short lets as a business. The chair thanked Robert Barker for spotting the issue in the first place.

4. Notes of AGM

Issues arising. The chair wondered if the BAGC had an appetite to work with the Barbican Horticultural Society to encourage people to populate their window boxes. Ideas: free sunflowers from the City (Sarah Hudson), free seeds (David Murray), advise people what to plant, an article in Barbican Life, a strategy to sustain the encouragement. Randall Anderson pointed out that next year Beech Gardens would be back in full flower and that might be a good time to mount a campaign. Gillian Laidlaw and Jenny Addison agreed to organise an article for Barbican Life. Pat Spicer agreed to pull together the various ideas, talk to the Horticultural Society, and bring proposals to the next meeting.

5. Election of officers

The following people stood unopposed and were re-elected:

Jane Smith, chair; Tim Macer, deputy chair; Robert Barker, honorary secretary

6. Appointment of subcommittees and chairs

The following chairs were reappointed

Access – Robert Barker

Cinemas group – Bruce Badger

Communications – Angela Starling, who was also co-opted onto the BAGC

Crossrail – Jane Smith

Estate Security and Crime Prevention – David Bradshaw

Licensing – Robert Barker

Planning – Garth Leder
Roofs – Robert Barker
Sustainability – Sarah Hudson
St Alphage House action group – Tim Macer
Internet communications working group – Tim Macer/Kai Virtanen
Road safety adviser – Ted Reilly
Cultural hub working party – Jane Smith
YMCA/2 Fann St working party – David Murray

It was queried whether the Noise and Pollution subcommittee was still active and whether it could be subsumed into something else. The chair said that she was on that committee and there were issues to deal with; she would talk to Steve Quilter about it.

7 Future dates

The following were agreed – but with a 7.30 start, rather than 8pm

BAGC dates	RCC dates	
3 July	1 September	
11 September	24 November	
13 November	“	
8 January 2015	?Jan	
12 March	? March	
23 April (AGM)		(Easter3-6 April)
30 April – election meeting	? June	

10. Relations between BA and house groups

David Murray had made some suggestions for how the BA might make more coherent comments by liaising more closely with house groups. The chair thought that the BA could and did coordinate house groups ((implicit in the new consultation process), and hoped the BA added value to house groups’ work through its experience of issues. David had suggested regularising the relationship through annual or biannual meetings of the BA chair and each house group chair: he thought there was value in slightly formalising the relationship. David Bradshaw thought that was what the BAGC existed for. Garth Leder said that he would encourage house groups to get in touch with the BA before they go to the City with an issue: a recent case might have been better made, where residents ended looking a bit silly. David Murray thought Beech Gardens was another example – Bunyan felt not taken notice of. Jenny Addison said that contact with the BA was useful to Frobisher because they were new to the estate and didn’t know how things worked.

The chair said that she thought the new consultation protocol might help: we should have more information earlier, circulated for house groups to consider, so we could be better prepared going into meetings with the City. She concluded that she was always willing to talk to house group chairs (in person or by email) but wouldn’t force herself on them: rather, she encouraged house groups to bring issues to the BAGC. John Whitehead suggested a register of house group issues, which could be used to communicate between house groups and be used to assess common issues. [JW subsequently produced such a register.]

11. Cultural hub

The chair referred to feedback from the Newsletter article and at the AGM. Change was happening anyway: with Crossrail and a rising population and it was better to live in a cultural hub than in a 24/7 night-time economy such as Smithfield. She thought residents should be positive about it – there were things in it for them – but work to mitigate any threat to residents’ quiet enjoyment of their homes. Key concepts would be for the Barbican Estate to be well maintained and well managed.

David Graves encouraged residents to think of positive things they might want as well as simply reacting. Randall Anderson thought that the City was trying to “think big”. The chair suggested that David Bradshaw might want to alert the police to the enterprise.

The chair said she had the first meeting of the BA’s cultural hub working party next week, and also she and Tim Macer had been invited to a meeting about the start of the consultation on Highways’ Barbican Area Strategy, which related to the cultural hub. The working party would draft something

for the BAGC to consider.

12. Barbican Area Strategy

See diagram of proposed consultation process. David Graves clarified that this strategy came from Highways and was about improving the roads and streets in the whole area – partly to accommodate more pedestrians, but also for the cultural hub, improving access and linking venues. He said that the City needs to elide the two elements more.

13. Updates

Silk Street. The chair reported she'd had a letter (already circulated to house group chairs and BAGC) saying that the streetworks will start on 27 May – with a closure of the junction with Beech Street for about 8 weeks. Sarah Hudson said she would be monitoring the air quality in the tunnel while it was closed to vehicles.

Crossrail – The chair would ask the BEO to circulate the 19 June date via the email, and she hoped the housegroups of the relevant houses would also alert their residents.

Consultation process – The chair and Tim had responded to the City's response to residents' comments on the consultation process. The City had accepted many of our proposals and she thought the process was almost there. She hoped the City would put it on their website and we can put it on the BA's as well.

Barbican Listed Landscape guidelines The chair congratulated the three resident representatives – Anne Naphine, Garth Leder, and Robert Barker for all their hard work on this, and the wider advisory group. She thought the resident representatives had put a lot of work into ensuring the guidelines would be useful. Robert Barker said that they would help resist developments such as the yellow shed and bridges across the lake. He explained they would next go to the RCC and BRC and then for wider consultation. Tim Macer said they would miss the RCC's June meeting so RCC consultation might have to be done in parallel with the public consultation. Garth Leder thought it was positive that the guidelines would be in place before the cultural hub started spinning off proposals.

TV/broadband Tim Macer said that he and Randall Anderson had talked to VFM about their marketing and whether they needed to come up with an additional, lesser, offer at a different price. They were receptive. Tim also commented that their pricing wasn't as bad as it looked at first, as you don't need a phone line, though overall pricing was never going to be cheaper. VFM would be holding another meeting and they also planned surgeries in the estate office.

14. AoB

Pat Spicer raised the Whitecross Street party. Last year it had had a loud sound system all day Saturday and Sunday and had several complaints. She said that the organisers had said last year that they would consult local residents this year, including local house groups: had anyone heard? There was some disagreement about whether this was a problem or whether it was just part of living in a city, but all wanted to know what would happen, and when. PS undertook to try to find out.

Robert Barker raised a licensing application that had just come in for a restaurant at 200 Aldersgate on the roundabout which wanted a licence till 1.30 am Friday and Saturday. He was talking to the affected house groups and seeking a meeting with the applicant.

15. Date of next meeting;

3 July 7.30 Lilac room

Meeting ended 9.15